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Il Governo locale inglese e le sue relazioni con la vita nazionale. Da PIETRO BERTOLINI. Torino, Fratelli Bocca, 1899. — 2 vols. : xiv, 539 pp. ; xiv, 507 pp.

The reform — it might almost be said the revolution — in the local government of England, which was begun by the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 and completed by the Local Government Acts of 1888 and 1894, seems to have attracted more attention on the Continent than in England itself, if we are to judge by the amount of readable, and at the same time scientific, literature which the movement has called forth. It is true that the passage of each of the important acts which have done so much to change the English governmental system has been followed by some English treatise. These works have, however, as a rule been intended for the practicing lawyer and the official class ; and, if they have not actually deterred the general reader from examining this most important course of legislation, they have assuredly done little to attract his attention thereto. On the Continent, on the contrary, students of politics have in the last ten years been devoting much time and labor to describing the great reform movement which has now been going on for more than half a century. In 1895 Vauthier, a Belgian, published his excellent work entitled *Le Gouvernement local de l'Angleterre* and Arminjon his volume, no less worthy of praise, *L'Administration locale de l'Angleterre* (see this QUARTERLY for December, 1895) ; and now we have the book under consideration by a member of the Italian Parliament.

Sig. Bertolini's work is more ambitious than that of any of his predecessors, with perhaps the exception of Gneist's famous *Local Self-government*, in that it is a most serious attempt, not merely to place before the reader a general sketch of the history of English local government, but also to enumerate and analyze in considerable detail the most important statutes which have influenced it. Indeed, the work is historical, rather than descriptive of actually existing institutions. It must, then, be treated from the point of view of history rather than from that of existing law. While we may regret that so able a hand as that of Sig. Bertolini has not made the attempt to describe English local government as it is now, we cannot be too thankful for so valuable a history of it. One of the great excellencies of this work is foreshadowed in the sub-title. The author has not been content to study English local government as a system sufficient unto itself, but has regarded it as merely a part of the general English system of government, to be intelligently studied

only in connection with the greater whole by which it was influenced, and upon which its influence was of the greatest importance.

Sig. Bertolini, while never afraid of going into detail, where detail is necessary, has nevertheless succeeded in making his work interesting to the general reader. Indeed, he joins in such an unusual manner capacity for detail and power of generalization, that it is to be hoped that some admirer of English progress in the nineteenth century will undertake the work of translating the book into English, so that it may be accessible to the large number of persons who believe that we have something to learn both from English institutions and from Continental views in regard to them.

The work is accompanied by an excellent bibliography, as well as by a list of the statutes which have played their part in producing the English local government of to-day; while it has, contrary to Continental practice, both an alphabetical index and a most detailed table of contents.

F. J. GOODNOW.

England in the Age of Wycliffe. By GEORGE MACAULAY TREVELYAN. London and New York, Longmans, Green & Co., 1899. — xiv, 380 pp.

At the first superficial glance, Mr. Trevelyan's title is to some extent misleading, for it gives the impression that special stress is placed upon Wycliffe and his career. This work is, however, not an account of the famous religious teacher and his times, but a full history of England and her people during the last decades of the fourteenth century. To the prominent part played by Wycliffe during these years due, but only due, recognition is given. Originally the book was prepared by Mr. Trevelyan as "a dissertation sent in to compete for a fellowship at Cambridge"; in its present form, being addressed to the general reading public as well as to the academic world, some technical discussions were for obvious reasons omitted.

These years, from about 1370 to 1385, form in many respects the most interesting period in mediæval English history. As Mr. Trevelyan aptly says, they represent "the meeting point of the mediæval and the modern." In every side of the nation's life this is apparent. Dr. Cunningham has already pointed this out as regards English commercial policy. In religion new and essentially modern ideas were cropping out, and in politics we see in certain claims of the Commons the germs of the later parliamentary system. From the economic standpoint, we perceive the decay of the old manorial system with serfdom and the rise of the free laborer.